Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
Ec7For
Cop 3

Foreign AGRICULTURE

REVIEW OF FOREIGN FARM POLICY, PRODUCTION, AND TRADE

VOLUME 11, NO. 6 **JUNE 1947**

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORD
MAY 28 1947
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

IN THIS ISSUE

Page
AGRICULTURE IN THE TRUK ISLANDS 74
  Geographical features 74
  Climate 74
  Vegetation 74
  People 75
  Settlement 76
  Pattern of agriculture 76
  Tree crops 77
  Root crops 78
  Other crops 79
  Livestock 79
  Fishing 80
  Effect of the war on agriculture 80
  Postwar rehabilitation 81
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CEYLON 81
LANDLORD vs. TENANT IN JAPAN 83
  A visit to the Hommas 83
  A visit to Ueda village, Yamagata Prefecture 86

ISSUED MONTHLY BY **OFFICE OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS**
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • WASHINGTON, D. C.

Agriculture in the Truk Islands

by **KARL J. PELZER***

The Truk Islands are a part of the Caroline Islands. Controlled in the past successively by Spain, Germany, and Japan, the Truk Islands were occupied by the United States after Japan's surrender. Whatever the ultimate political arrangements are, a safe assumption is that the United States will have a great interest in this archipelago together with all other groups of the former Japanese Mandated Islands. The agriculture of the Truk Islanders is of a type which is fundamentally different from that of the United States, both with regard to crops and to techniques. It is typical for a large part of the island world of the Pacific.

Geographical Features

The Truk Islands are located 7° north of the Equator and approximately 151° east of Greenwich in the North Pacific Ocean. They lie in a lagoon surrounded by a great 114-mile-long barrier reef. The reef itself is roughly triangular in shape and protrudes above the water in about 50 places to form low sand-and-coral islets. Some 14 high volcanic and many more low coral-and-sand islands lie within the lagoon. The area of the lagoon has been estimated variously—from 500 to 800 square miles. The total land area of Truk has been placed at about 40 square miles. (See figs. 1 and 2.)

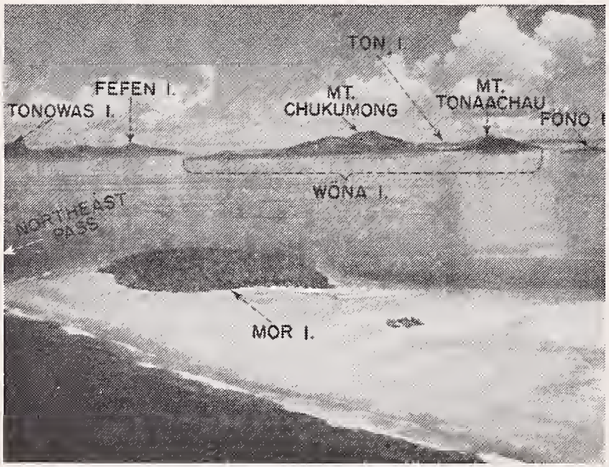

FIGURE 1.—Truk Islands seen from east.

Of the 14 high volcanic islands, 6 range from 1 to 13 square miles in area. The other 8 are less than 1 square mile in size.

The parent rock of the larger volcanic islands consists chiefly of basalt, volcanic agglomerates, and consolidated ash. Some of the islands, such as Uman, are formed by a single mountain whereas others are made up of groups of mountains. The mountains usually have rather steep slopes near the top if they rise above 500 feet but gentle slopes in lower elevations, and they are surrounded by flat lowlands. Every one of the islands has a fringing reef flat of varying width formed by corals. These reef flats control the movement between various islands and the approaches to the settlements.

Virtually every one of the high islands has some swampland, known as *pokak*, which lies between the sandy beach and the volcanic upland. These swamp areas are usually belts of varying width which run parallel to the shore. Some of them are saline swamps, but others are nonsaline and are of great economic importance, because they are used for the raising of taro.

In contrast to the high islands, which culminate in the 1,480-foot peak of Mount Unipot on Ton Island, the low islands do not rise more than a few feet above sea level. They consist of coral sand and coral limestone and are small in size.

Climate

The Truk Islands have a tropical oceanic climate. Temperatures differ only slightly from season to season but vary somewhat more in the course of the day, usually ranging between 75° F. in the early morning hours to 85° F. in the afternoon. The high islands receive considerably more rain than do the low islands owing to orographic conditions. Rainfall is distributed throughout the year, but the months of January, February, and March receive considerably less than do the months from June through August.

Vegetation

The vegetation of Truk reflects variations in topography, parent rock, soils, rainfall, and drain-

---

*Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations.

Dr. Pelzer spent several months in the Truk Islands during the summer of 1946 as a member of the Economic Survey, organized by the U. S. Commercial Company.

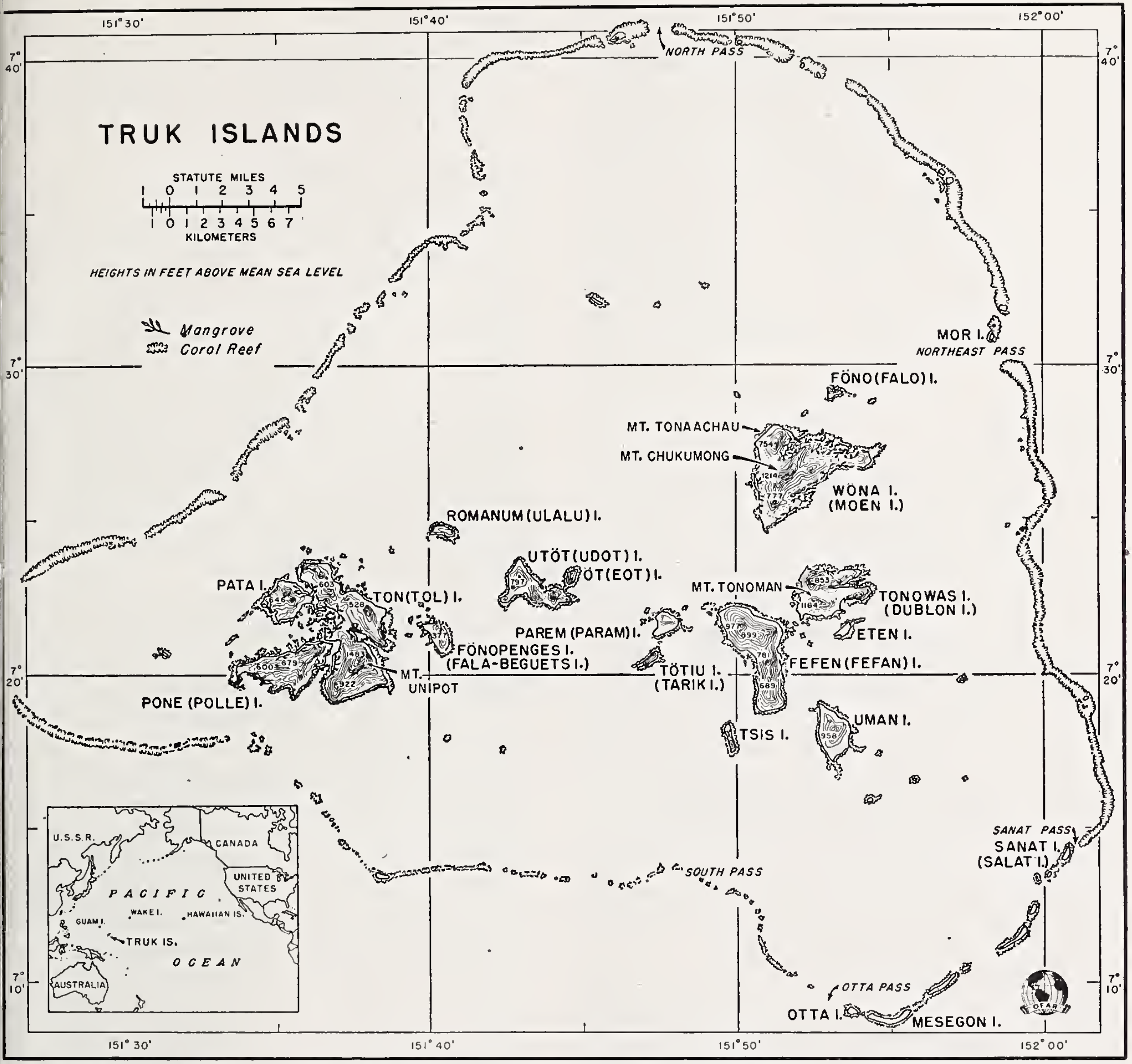

Figure 2.—Native place names appear on map; in parentheses names used by U. S. Hydrographic Office.

age. The high islands were once completely forested, but most of the original forest cover has been destroyed as a result of native agriculture. There are, however, small remnants of primeval forest preserved on steep slopes and in elevations above 600 or 700 feet. Below that elevation breadfruit trees and coconut palms are the dominant tree species.

Patches of land which are used intermittently for the raising of annual crops—when not in cultivation are covered with tall grasses, especially *Paspalum conjugatum*, or with weedy shrubs and small trees, such as *Hibiscus*, *Acalypha*, and *Macaranga*. Whenever these areas are left lying fallow long enough and are not burned over, the hardwood trees of the forest, such as *Calophyllum*, *Cynometra*, and *Parinarium*, come back. Quite extensive mangrove-swamp forests line the shores of the various islands.

The vegetation of the low coral islands within the lagoon, as well as of those on the outer barrier reef, is not so rich as that of the high islands.

People

The Truk Islands are inhabited by Micronesians, who are akin to the Polynesians and Malays. They are short and slender. Their skin is light brown, their hair is either black or dark brown and is usually wavy. They speak a distinct language of their own which belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian linguistic group. Today the native population numbers roughly 9,200, compared with 10,400 in 1935.

Socially the people of Truk are organized into exogamous, matrilinear clans of which there are some 50 throughout the islands. Prior to foreign domination these Truk clans were of prime economic importance, since all land belonged to them. The clan chief supervised its use by the clan members.

Settlement

In aboriginal days the Truk people of the high islands usually lived on farmsteads which ran from the shore inland up the slope to elevations of 400 to 500 feet. Beyond stretched no-man's land up to the crests and peaks of the mountains. Since the land was clan-owned, each farmstead usually had several households. For reasons of security the houses were not located along the shore or in the coastal lowlands but somewhat higher up on the slopes. Several farmsteads and their clans form a political unit—a village—which the Truk call *sop*. Such a village is under the leadership of a chief who belongs to the leading, most powerful clan. With the suppression of warfare it became perfectly safe to move the houses down the hill to the shore, and irregular clusters formed a loosely knit village type of settlement.

The old-style house is a low rectangular, floorless and windowless hut, the walls and roofs of which are made of coconut and ivory-nut thatch. Today the Truk Islanders prefer a wooden house built on posts with a floor, sliding doors and windows, a veranda, and a corrugated-iron roof. The cooking is done in special cook houses.

Truk had only one small town, which developed around the administrative center on the island of Tonowas (Dublon). This town was almost completely destroyed during the war by bombs.

The present-day location of Truk villages is symbolic of the structure of Truk economy, which is founded on agriculture and fishing, trade and industry being relatively unimportant. With only two exceptions, they are located on the shore and have easy access to the sea that supplies the inhabitants with their protein food. The village land runs from the sea up to the crest of the mountains, where it meets with the land belonging to the village lying on the opposite coast. On the low atoll islands, village land stretches across the island from the lagoon to the ocean side.

Pattern of Agriculture

Casual observers not familiar with tropical agriculture get a poor opinion of the agricultural practices on Truk, since they fail to find carefully laid-out fields free of weeds. Actually the Truk people have an agricultural economy which makes good use of the limited soil resources without waste and exposure to accelerated erosion, which, in view of the high rainfall and the steepness of the slopes of the high islands, could very easily have been started. The only instances of erosion that the writer observed were in areas deforested and planted to sweetpotatoes by the Japanese during the war.

Truk agriculture is carried on today in much the same way as in the days when the first Europeans reached the island. The most important tools are the long bush knife (*sapsap*) and the digging stick (*ot*). The peasant seldom has any other farming tools. The bush knife is his constant companion. With it he cuts down weeds, small trees, and bushes and thus clears the ground prior to planting. With it he controls weeds and second-growth trees in his garden and fields.

The digging stick is used for the planting of such crops as taro and sugarcane, for the husking of coconuts, and the carrying of burdens. It is about 5 feet long and 1.5 to 2 inches in diameter. One end is pointed, and the other end has a broad edge. When used as a husking stick, the end with the broad edge is pushed into the ground, and the coconut is driven with force onto the sharp point, which loosens the husk from the nut itself.

The Truk peasants use some land continuously, some intermittently, depending upon the crop and the nature of the land. The nonsaline swamps on the inner side of the low coastal plain are used continuously for the raising of root crops, such as *Cyrtosperma* (*puna*) and *Colocasia* (*oni*), both of which are taros. All land under perennial tree crops, such as coconuts and breadfruit, is in permanent use. Uplands and hillsides which are suitable for agriculture and which are not used for tree crops are cultivated only intermittently to produce such crops as sugarcane, elephant ear, and tobacco. Between two cultivations, the land reverts to second-growth forest and may lie fallow for several years. Instead of crop rotation, the Truk farmers practice field rotation in order to prevent rapid exhaustion of their land.

The land resources of the inhabited low coral islands are extremely limited, and the practice of shifting cultivation is not feasible. Every square foot of land has to be continuously utilized. Plant refuse is usually returned to the soil and is applied especially to the taro fields, located in natural depressions in the center of the islands. On some islands, the population has enlarged and deepened these depressions. Such expenditure of energy is not necessary on the volcanic islands.

Tree crops and root crops[1] are the mainstays of Truk agriculture. According to Japanese statistics, Truk and the surrounding islands administered from Truk had 10,500 acres in coconuts, 7,600 acres in breadfruit, 600 acres in various kinds of taro, and about 90 acres of miscellaneous crops. Coconut and breadfruit accounted for 96 percent and taros for 3 percent of the crop area. Although the people have become familiar with such grains as rice, corn, and sorghum, which were raised by the Japanese and Okinawans in relatively small quantities before the war and more extensively during the war, a recent survey did not locate a single family in Truk which raised any of these grains in order to obtain the requisite carbohydrates; instead, everybody depended mainly upon breadfruit, bananas, and root crops. The Truk peasants practice a grainless agriculture. This is especially striking at this time, since they had recently become quite accustomed to rice.

Tree Crops

Every Truk village has extensive groves of breadfruit trees (*mai*) and coconut palms (*nü*), either in pure or mixed stands. In pre-European days, the breadfruit was more important than coconut, and as a result breadfruit trees were more numerous. Breadfruits cannot be exported but must be consumed locally, whereas copra and other products of the coconut palm are readily exportable. Both the German and Japanese administrations encouraged and, where necessary, ordered the clearing of forest land and the planting of palms. The Germans, for example, ordered each family to plant at least 100 palms, and many families planted several times this number. As a result, the coconut palm has become the dominant tree species in Truk for about two-thirds of the way up the slopes of such high mountains as Unipot on Ton, Tonoman on Tonowas, and Chukumong on Wöna. Also, it covers even the highest parts of such islands as Fönopenges, Utöt, Romanum, and Öt. The breadfruit tree is the subdominant species.

BREADFRUIT

The breadfruit tree is not only very important as a source of starchy food but also as a source of valuable timber used in the construction of houses, the making of bowls, and the building of outrigger canoes. The tree attains a height of 40 to 50 feet. The leaves, which are serrated and may be 1.5 feet long, are used to wrap food and other things. The fruit is about 6 to 8 inches in diameter and has a rough, yellow-green skin. The sticky sap is utilized for the caulking of boats. Mixed with colored earth it is used to paint boats. According to the botanist, Dr. F. Raymond Fosberg, Truk may be considered one of the centers of breadfruit culture. Here scores of varieties, both seedless and seedy, are in cultivation. West and east in the Carolines and in the Marianas, the breadfruit is more nearly a secondary food.

The trees are propagated from roots or cuttings. The period during which fresh breadfruit is available has been prolonged by development of varieties that mature both early and late so that fresh breadfruit is available in varying quantities during at least 6 months of the year. The main harvest season (*ras*) falls into the period from July to September (fig. 3).

Fresh breadfruit is either baked and eaten much as a baked potato, or it is steamed and pounded with pounders (*üsüs*), made of coral or basalt, on pounding boards (*nif*). The pounded breadfruit has the consistency of a rather stiff dough or pudding (*kon*), which is shaped into round or oval loaves. These loaves are wrapped into large taro, banana, or breadfruit leaves (fig. 4). There are, of course, many other ways of preparing breadfruit. On special occasions the pounded breadfruit (*kon en mai*) is rolled into small balls, or cut into little cubes, put into a bowl, and covered with coconut milk. This is generally considered a delicacy.

During the main harvest season every family stores its surplus breadfruit in pits (*nas*), where it

---

[1] The term "root crops" includes plants grown for their rhizomes, corms, tubers, or roots.

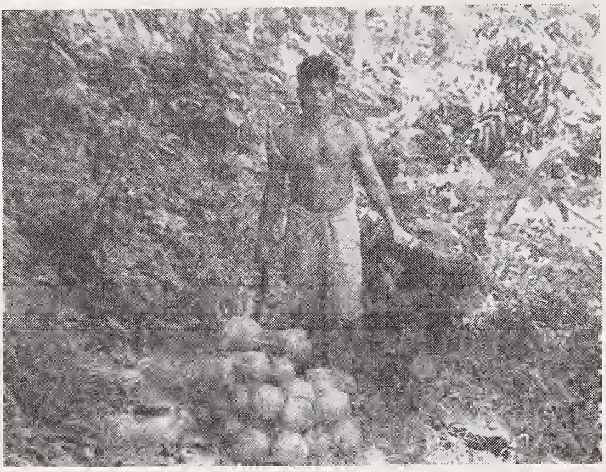

Figure 3.—Truk peasant harvesting breadfruit.

is preserved by fermentation. The fermented breadfruit is called *mar.* There are three sizes of pits. The smallest has a diameter of 3 to 4 feet and is about 3 feet deep. The largest is about three times as large. Only in years with an especially abundant harvest do the Truk peasants fill the large-sized pits in addition to the small- and medium-sized ones.

COCONUT

Next in importance to the breadfruit tree is the coconut palm, which is utilized in numerous ways by the people of Truk. They drink the water of the young nuts. Especially on the coral islands, they bleed unopened spathes and collect the sap, which is rich in sugar and vitamin B, and is usually consumed unfermented. The jellylike meat of very young coconuts is easily digested, and mothers use the flesh as supplementary food for their babies. The flabby white meat of drinking nuts is eaten without any ill effects, since it is not so rich as the meat of a ripe nut. The latter is used as food either grated or in the form of coconut milk pressed out of the grated meat. This coconut milk is very rich in fat and is usually poured over starchy dishes prepared from fresh or preserved breadfruit or taro.

The wood of old palms is used for construction purposes. The leaves supply thatch and material for basket weaving. The shells serve as cups and ladles, and the fiber of the husk is used on the low islands around Truk for the making of cord and rope.

According to the oldest inhabitants of Truk, the number of breadfruit trees has remained more or less stationary, whereas the number of coconut palms has increased enormously during the past 60 to 70 years. This development was encouraged, as mentioned above, by the German and Japanese administrators, since there was an ever-growing demand for copra. The sale of their copra enabled the Truk Islanders to purchase imported manufactured goods and foreign foods, such as rice and canned fish.

OTHER TREES

Of lesser importance are banana, pandanus, papaya, lime and sour-orange, soursop, and mango trees. The last-mentioned was introduced into Truk by American missionaries in the 1880's.

Before cotton cloth became available, the people of Truk obtained their fibers from either *Hibiscus tiliaceus* L. or a banana variety grown especially for this purpose. The Japanese encouraged the raising of Hibiscus and exported the decorticated bast fiber to Japan. The wood of this tree is of great value in the construction of houses and canoes.

Root Crops

Next after tree crops, root crops are the most important. The traditional ones are the following: *Cyrtosperma chamissonis* (Schott) Merr. (*puna*), *Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott (*oni*), and *Alocasia macrorrhiza* (L.) Schott (*kä*), as well as *Tacca leontopetaloides* (L.) Kuntze (*mokmok*). To these have been added, relatively recently, sweetpotatoes and manioc or cassava. Both of these are, however, not popular with the Truk Islanders but were raised by the Japanese on a large scale during the war. Strangely enough yams (*Dioscorea* sp.) are of little, or no, economic importance in Truk but form one of the staples in Ponape and Kusaie.

Cyrtosperma is a very large plant from 6 to 12 feet in height (fig. 5). It may be distinguished from other tarolike plants by its pointed basal leaf lobes and erect, shiny, dark-green leaves. The petiole is usually covered with short spines. This leading root crop of the Truk Islanders is raised in the fresh-water swamps or marshes which are formed in depressions between the volcanic uplands and the sandy coasts. Such fresh-water marshes are especially extensive on Wöna, Tonowas, Uman, Ton, and Pone. They are rather fertile, because they receive a steady supply of new minerals, essential for new plant growth, from the upland. This shows up both in the yield and in the color of the leaves as compared with *Cyrtosperma* grown in artificial depressions on low coral islands.

Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) grows from 3 to 5 feet high and has large heart-shaped leaves which are always peltately attached (fig. 5). It has a large edible corm, and its young leaves make an excellent vegetable when cooked long enough to remove the calcium oxolate crystals. The plant flourishes either in wet marshes or on moist but well-drained upland. In other words, taro, like rice, can be raised under both wet-land and dry-land conditions.

The people of Truk recognize a great many races of *Cyrtosperma* and *Colocasia* on the basis of vegetative differences in color, leaf shape, size and shape of the corms, and edible qualities.

Elephant ear (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*) looks somewhat like taro but has large glossy leaves which are not edible. The plant is grown only on dry land, usually on hillsides in temporary forest clearings. Its tuber is much larger than that of the taro and is considered definitely inferior to the other two aroids, because even when cooked it still irritates the mouth. The cultivated kind is called *kä* in Truk, but there seems to be a wild variety found in the forest which is called *munü.*

Arrowroot (*Tacca leontopetaloides*) grows everywhere spontaneously. The tubers are dug when the plant dries up in October and are cleaned and grated. The meal is placed on a mat coarse enough to retain the fibrous gratings. Then water is poured over the meal, and the starch is washed out. Dishes made of arrowroot starch are considered a delicacy and may be prepared for babies or sick persons, but the amount of labor involved and the small quantity of starch obtained from a single plant may explain why arrowroot is not an important source of food supply in Truk.

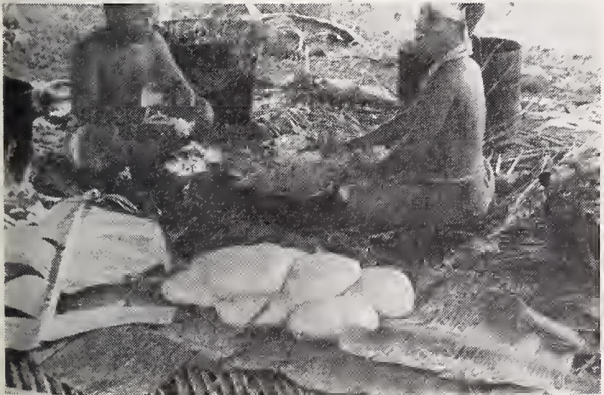

FIGURE 4.—Men pounding steamed breadfruit. In foreground loaves of breadfruit "pudding" (*kon en mai*).

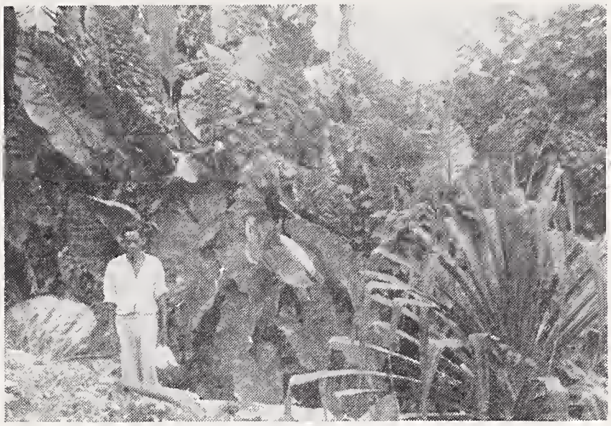

FIGURE 5.—*Cyrtosperma* and *Colocasia.*

Other Crops

The Truk peasants raise a number of other crops in small quantities, usually in small gardens near their houses. Among these, one should mention especially sugarcane, which is chewed for its juice; pineapple; tobacco; red pepper; and such vegetables as melons, pumpkins, squashes, cucumbers, and a few others, mostly introduced by the Japanese.

In addition to cultivated crops, the Truk people make use of a number of wild plants, some of which they gather regularly, others only in times of food scarcity.

All economic activities in Truk are—or at least were until recently—surrounded by religious customs and rituals, such as the use of magic and observation of taboo regulations. The harvest rituals are quite colorful and elaborate. They consist primarily in the celebration of a series of feasts during the harvest season. The religious significance of the feasts is founded on the belief that they safeguard future production and food supply.

Livestock

The most important animals on the Truk farm are hogs and chickens. In normal times every family has a few chickens and at least one or two hogs. Only the more well-to-do families, especially the chief's family, have a few head of cattle. Cattle are found only on the high islands; the low islands do not have enough pasture to support them. Cattle are raised for their meat, and not as draft animals or for milk production, because, except for that sweetened and condensed, the Truk people do not like milk.

Meat is usually eaten only on special occasions and on feast days.

Fishing

Fish, including shellfish, are the most important source of protein in the daily diet. Thus, fishing is, next to agriculture, the principal economic activity. It is a subsistence rather than a commercial type of fishing. There developed during the Japanese regime an important commercial fishing industry in Truk, but it was exclusively in the hands of Okinawans and Japanese.

On the high volcanic islands most of the daily fishing is done by women, and agriculture is the task of men. The extensive reef flats around the high islands are the nursery grounds for a great many species of fish which migrate to the outer barrier reef as they approach maturity. In addition, the flats have many different kinds of shellfish, including snails, clams, lobsters, and crabs. It is relatively easy for women to gather these shellfish by hand and to catch the fish in hand nets (*epino*). The nets are made of the fiber of *achökken* (*Enhalus acoroides*), a seaweed which grows in shallow waters.

The men fish with spears, throw nets, and beach seines within the lagoon, and occasionally they will troll outside the barrier reef for bonito, barracuda, and crevelle.

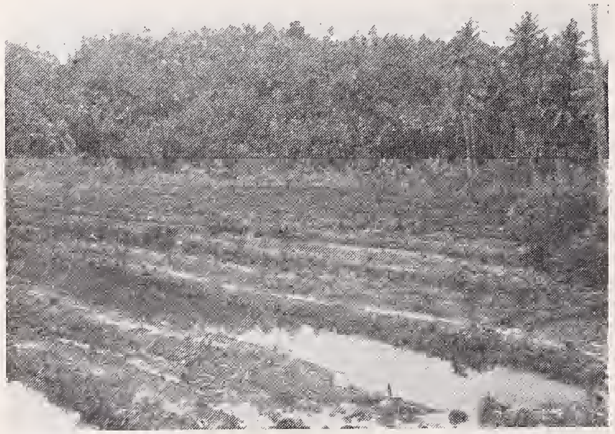

Figure 6.—Former taro swamp drained by the Japanese during the war and converted to sweetpotato and vegetable production.

Effect of the War on Agriculture

Every phase of Truk agriculture was greatly affected by the war. The Japanese armed forces constructed airfields on the islands of Eten, Parem, and Wöna, and they requisitioned additional, extensive areas of land for defense installations. They cut down a high percentage of the coconut and breadfruit trees in areas selected for military purposes, and they filled in taro swamps.

After the occupation of Saipan and Guam by the United States, the Japanese Navy was no longer able to supply the garrison forces on Truk with foodstuffs; consequently, the 40,000 men stationed there had to become part-time farmers in order to stave off starvation. The Japanese commanders, realizing that sweetpotatoes and cassava yield more food per acre than breadfruit and coconut, ordered the destruction of large stands of these trees in order to convert the land to sweetpotato, cassava, and vegetable production.

In many instances the Japanese drained nonsaline swamps after they had dug up the taro and converted the land to the raising of quick-growing crops (fig. 6). In the drainage ditches they installed flood gates, which they raised during low tide to permit the water to drain off the land and closed during high tide to keep the sea water out. This resulted in the current shortage of mature taro and of seed material.

The war brought about a large loss of livestock. At the time of Japan's surrender there were few cattle left—their number having been reduced from about 300 to 5 head. Approximately 90 percent of the hogs were slaughtered. Many villages no longer have a single hog. The loss of chickens was not quite so serious, but their number, too, was greatly reduced.

At the end of 1946 nobody was starving in Truk, but the composition of the diet had been greatly affected by the war. Some of the villagers lacked breadfruit and taro and had to depend upon the sweetpotato and cassava fields, the vegetable gardens, and the banana and papaya plantations which the Japanese had planted but were not able to harvest before their repatriation. On some islands considerable acreages of these crops have been going to waste since the end of hostilities. The diet was deficient, or at least low, in protein because of the lack of livestock and the depletion of the fishing grounds within the lagoon. The latter resulted from the fact that the Japanese used dynamite in order to obtain the maximum quantity of fish within a minimum of time, since daily air raids in 1945 made fishing rather hazardous.

The extensive destruction of coconut plantations caused probably the most serious damage to the economy, since it reduced, for years to come, the copra production to a fraction of what it had been before the war. This is especially serious inasmuch as copra is the only agricultural export commodity of importance.

Postwar Rehabilitation

One of the first goals of the rehabilitation of Truk should be an increase in the production of staple foodstuffs—breadfruit and taro. This will involve the replanting of breadfruit groves and taro swamps. Furthermore, the islands need pigs, poultry, goats, and some cattle as breeding stock.

The recovery will not be complete until the coconut areas have been replanted and are once more in production, which will require a period of at least 8 to 10 years from the time the palms are planted.

Agricultural Development in Ceylon

by **MALCOLM PARK***

Ceylon is faced today with the fundamental problem of a backward peasant community living on the land and practicing a primitive and wasteful form of agriculture which is quite out of place in the modern world. The Government is just embarking upon ambitious plans for tackling this problem at its roots. The general ideas behind the scheme are of interest, although the details naturally depend upon local conditions.

Ceylon is divided, near the middle of the island, into two zones by a mountain mass which rises at its highest point to just over 8,000 feet. This mountain mass plays an important part in the island's rainfall and therefore in its agriculture, because the southwest monsoon wind, which blows about half the year, hits the hills and brings rain to the southwestern part of the island but not to the northern and eastern parts. During the other half year, the northeast monsoon brings rain to the whole of the island, especially in the months October to December. The result is that the southwestern part of Ceylon, from a fourth to a third of the island, gets some 75 to 300 inches of rain a year, although the usual rainfall in this southwest or "wet" zone is about 100 inches a year. The remainder of Ceylon is mainly more or less flat country, broken by low rocky hills, with a rainfall of from 25 to 75 inches a year. The average annual rainfall in this "dry" zone is about 50 inches.

The soils of Ceylon, generally speaking, are markedly deficient in lime and acid in reaction. They erode very easily, a fact which has aggravated one of the main agricultural problems—that of soil conservation.

The agricultural development of Ceylon has in the past been closely linked with the major plantation, or "estate," industries—coffee first, and then tea, rubber, and coconuts. Coffee has not been grown to any extent since the terrible epidemic of leaf disease wiped out the plantations toward the end of the past century. But of the other three, tea and rubber cover about half a million acres each, mostly in the hills and the wet zone, and coconuts about a million. Most of Ceylon's revenue has in the past come from these plantation industries.

Before 1931, much of the work of Ceylon's Department of Agriculture was concerned with the plantation industries, and the development of village agriculture received scant attention. But during the past few years the plantation industries have set up their own research organizations—the Rubber Research Scheme, the Tea Research Institute, and the Coconut Research Scheme—and this has resulted in some freedom of time and effort to concentrate on developing a settled form of peasant agriculture in the vast tracts of the dry zone. The almost complete utilization of cultivable land in the wet zone makes it imperative that new land in

---

*Deputy Director of Agriculture, Peradeniya, Ceylon.

Publication of this article was made possible through the courtesy of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

For a detailed discussion of Ceylon's agriculture, see LADEJINSKY, W. I. AGRICULTURE IN CEYLON. Foreign Agr. 8: 3–20, illus. 1944.

the dry zone be opened up to accommodate the increasing population in agricultural pursuits.

In this zone there has been until recently virtually no settled agriculture, apart from the cultivation of rice—locally known as "paddy." Crop failures due to light rainfall, low yields, and inadequate water supplies during the dry season and the prevalence of malaria are the chief obstacles which have held back development in the past. Most of the land is covered with jungle, which has been exploited for centuries by the local villagers in the practice of a form of shifting cultivation. Under this system, the villager gets a permit to use a block of jungle, usually about 1 to 5 acres. During the dry weather he fells, burns, and clears this patch, and during the rains of September and October he plants among the stumps such crops as corn, or one of the millets, mixed with peppers, pumpkins, or other vegetables; or he may plant a "cash" crop, such as cotton. These crops are harvested in the dry weather of February. Other crops may be planted for one, two, or three seasons, depending on the fertility of the soil and the rate of weed growth. The villager then abandons the land, which reverts to jungle—usually not quite such good jungle as before—and moves on to another block of land.

This type of cultivation, called "chena" in Ceylon is practiced in many tropical countries. It is uneconomic, extravagant, and wasteful and usually brings in a poor return to the cultivator. Just a realization that an existing system is bad, however, is not enough. A satisfactory alternative must be provided, and that, in a nutshell, the Department of Agriculture wants to do. It wants to replace the chena system by a form of settled agriculture, combining animal husbandry with the cultivation of arable crops.

Rice or paddy, which is the main village crop, needs plenty of water, and the focus, so to speak, of the dry-zone development work is a major irrigation program. Luckily, Ceylon is well-suited to irrigation, because the high rainfall in the hills runs off to the sea in large rivers, which can be used for filling up reservoirs, or diverted directly into irrigation channels. Water has been used in this way for centuries, and the jungle is full of the ruins of ancient works. The Irrigation Department has been investigating these old schemes to determine which can be reconditioned and where completely new schemes can be constructed.

Hand in hand with the irrigation schemes must go the development of the jungle land lying beneath them. The time-honored method of felling, burning, and clearing goes on, but the Department is introducing machinery and looks forward to the time when it can clear and stump the land without destroying, by burning, the valuable humus in the surface layers of the soil. When more machinery is available, it will be used increasingly in jungle reclamation.

Once the land is cleared, immediate steps are taken to check soil erosion. Land which is to be used for cultivating paddy under irrigation is divided up by "bunds" or earth mounds, to give contour strips generally not less than one chain (66 feet) in width. These contour strips make the cultivation of the land in between much easier, either by ox or by tractor.

In constructing banks or bunds for checking erosion on land which is not to be irrigated, the contours are not followed exactly, but the bunds are graded very gently into the main down drainage lines. This tends to avoid waterlogging and to get rid of surplus storm water. On this kind of land, the Department insists on strip cropping and giving good long runs for the implements. Fodder grass, or some green-manure plant, is commonly grown on the bunds. This type of soil conservation is very efficient.

All this jungle reclamation is being done by the state, on crown land, or on land acquired by the state. The alienation of land for private development is a thing of the past in Ceylon, and most of the schemes are intended for peasant colonists, and occasionally for middle-class colonists. In peasant settlements it has been found to work better if the colonists are given fully developed holdings; so, after the land has been cleared, houses are built, fences put up, fruit trees planted, and livestock provided for the settlers. As might be expected, there is no shortage of applicants, and it is not always easy to select the right men. Usually those who have worked satisfactorily as laborers in clearing the land give the best results.

Much attention is being given to the settlers' welfare. Hospitals and schools are being built, cooperation is being encouraged, and help is being given in the marketing of produce. Ceylon's Department of Agriculture has experiment stations and farms in all the big development areas, where seed, fruit trees, and other plants are raised for issue to the colonists. A number of model holdings have been built where trained workers will demonstrate to others improved methods of working the land. All this may savor rather of spoon-feeding, but not if one remembers that a whole way of life must be changed.

Although Ceylon recently had only about 200 tractors, results from the use of agricultural machinery have been most promising. No decision has been reached as to how machinery, when more is available, will be operated in colonization schemes. It may be owned by the state, or by individuals, and hired out, or it may be owned by cooperative societies. In any case, some form of collective working will be necessary.

Experience on departmental farms and experiment stations has indicated that arable cultivation cannot be continued indefinitely even with crop rotation and manuring. The soil loses fertility, and there is evidence that the structure itself deteriorates. The conclusion is therefore that there must be introduced into the present scheme a periodic change-over of land from crops to pasture, and this means many problems of research into pastures, rotational grazing, suitable grasses and pasture plants, and the like.

Another important aspect of the work is on crops. The Department has research officers stationed in the different zones who work mainly on the crops most suited to their particular areas. They carry out selection work on their crops and produce improved seed to be multiplied and distributed by the agricultural officers. Other phases of the work include farm schools and work on animal husbandry. The whole program is designed for and dedicated to bringing Ceylon back to a position more in keeping with the title once applied to this island—the Granary of the East.

Landlord vs. Tenant in Japan

by **W. I. LADEJINSKY***

The following notes were made in Japan on a field trip undertaken by the author in order to gain first-hand information on the attitude of the tenants and landlords toward the land reform then under consideration. They do not aim to give the reader the whys and wherefores of that reform. The belief is, however, that one may glean from them some of the conditions that called for the enactment of the program, as well as some of the problems encountered in devising a program that would improve the economic and social position of the majority of Japanese farmers.

A Visit to the Hommas

The agrarian problem of Japan is reflected in a triangular struggle and competition among a small group of large landlords, a large class of petty landlords, and a large tenantry. A field trip provided the opportunity for a close contact with all these. In the sumptuous villa of the old family of the Hommas, landlordism put its best foot forward; and nearby, in a small village, the tenants and a few small landlords discussed in open meeting the pros and cons of landownership and improved tenant conditions. We shall begin with the Hommas.

The large holdings of the Homma family are in Yamagata Prefecture, which is on the northwestern part of Honshu, facing the Sea of Japan. Yamagata is the fourth most important rice-producing Prefecture and the second largest surplus-rice producer. Sixty-seven percent of the total cultivated acreage of Yamagata (140,000 cho)[1] is under rice, and the remainder is under upland crops. In some sections of the Prefecture the proportion of paddy to upland is 10 to 1.

More than in many other Prefectures, tenancy is highly developed in Yamagata; about 80 percent of the farm families are tenants or part tenants. They rent 60 percent of the paddy and 38 percent of the upland fields. Rentals for the paddy fields range from 40 to 50 percent of the crop. The widespread development of tenancy in Yamagata stems from the fact that some of the large landholdings of Japan are in this Prefecture. For instance, Yamagata has 44 landlords, each of whom has more than 100 cho (245 acres). Together they own a total of 9,056 cho.

One of the largest landlords of Yamagata, and probably of all Japan, is the Homma clan, whose seat is the city of Sakata. The clan owns more than 4,000 acres, chiefly under rice. In Japan, where the average farm is 2.5 acres in size, this is a large holding indeed. There are not more than 25 holdings of comparable size in the whole country.

---

*Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations.

Mr. Ladejinsky was on duty with the Agricultural Division, Natural Resources Section, SCAP, Tokyo, from January 1946 through January 1947. He was actively engaged in assisting in the formulation of the land-reform program now being carried out in Japan.

Another field trip and the program itself will be discussed in future issues of this publication.

[1] 1 cho equals 2.450 acres.

The Homma clan consists of one principal family and 15 branch families. The principal family owns 1,211 cho, which are cultivated by 3,998 tenants—an average of 0.75 acre per tenant. The 15 branch families own a total of 440 cho, leased to 1,144 tenants—an average of slightly less than an acre for each. It should be noted in passing that the amount of land cultivated by a Homma tenant is larger than the indicated averages. In Yamagata Prefecture, where there is practically no double cropping on the paddy fields owing to severe climatic conditions, a tenant must farm at least 5 acres of land in order to make both ends meet. Hence, a Homma tenant must also rent land from other landlords.

The Hommas have always preferred buying to selling land. Some 250 years ago the clan owned only 30 cho. The largest additions since then have been made in years of famine or economic depression. The usual pattern was for the Hommas to buy the land a small holder was pressed to sell and then to establish the same holder as a tenant. The Homma acreage and number of tenants increased rapidly after the Meiji Restoration, and by 1925 their holdings reached a peak.

All agreements with the tenants are in writing, and for a period of 5 years. In the opinion of the Hommas, these contracts guarantee to the tenant the right of cultivation. Indeed, paternalism and "noblesse oblige," with which the Hommas seem to be imbued, require that the tenant should be certain of his cultivation right during the life of the lease. According to the principal owner, there has been no case within his memory in which the Hommas abrogated an agreement for the sake of turning land over to another tenant at a higher rental. Most of the Homma tenants have been cultivating the same land for many generations past.

It is customary among the tenants on the Homma properties, as well as on land that belongs to other landlords, to sell their cultivation right for a consideration, ranging from 200 to 300 yen per tan,[2] depending upon the fertility of the land. Very often such transactions are effected without the knowledge of the landlords. The Hommas do not object to such deals, provided the new tenant is willing to abide by the agreement between the former tenant and the Hommas.

The rental per tan of a Homma paddy field is 1 koku of rice,[3] and this represents 40 percent of the yield. Twenty percent of the rent is paid in October, 50 percent in December, and 30 percent in January. The rent consists of the best quality rice and must be delivered to a place assigned by the owner. In a year of a poor crop (when the crop is smaller than twice the farm rent), or when the yield is 1.5 koku per tan, the rent is reduced to 0.7 koku. If the crop is less than 30 percent of normal, the tenant is relieved from paying any rent. If a rent reduction cannot be agreed upon, the case is decided by a conciliation committee.

The Hommas reserve the right to abrogate the contract if the tenant does not pay the rental as agreed, and if the reason for not paying is not deemed sufficient by the landlord. A tenant cannot ask for a reduction in rent if the poor crop results from his carelessness. In case the tenanted land is about to be sold, or donated to shrines, temples, or other public bodies, the Hommas reserve the right to end the agreement before the lease expires. A typical Homma agreement specifies that the tenants must live up faithfully to the prevailing tenancy customs of the locality; failure to fulfill the conditions permits the landlord to break the agreement. Every Homma-tenant agreement must be countersigned by one or two guarantors, who, with the tenant, share in the responsibility for the fulfillment of the obligations to the landlord.

The nature of an agreement between the Hommas and a tenant differs but little from the run-of-the-mill contract. When this fact was called to the attention of the Hommas, who insisted that they were among the very best landlords of Japan, they countered by enumerating their good deeds in behalf of the tenants, deeds which do not appear in the formal agreements.

And what do the Hommas think of the pending land program?[4] In the 1920's, they contended, when the Government launched a land-purchasing program in behalf of the poorer farmers, the family was wholly in sympathy with it. In fact, in subsequent years, and in response to the program, the Hommas sold 576 acres to tenants. Most of the land reverted back to the Hommas later, but, the owners assured this observer, this was hardly their fault.

---

[2] 1 tan equals one-tenth of a cho or one-fourth of an acre.

[3] 1 koku equals 5.11902 bushels (USA).

[4] The broad outlines of a land-reform program that would enable the majority of the tenants to purchase land were being widely discussed in the Japanese press.

They argued that new owners found it difficult to keep their holdings chiefly because of the sharp fluctuations in the price of rice; that the farmers preferred tenancy, after all, because of the economic security provided by the Hommas; that tenants have no confidence in schemes of land ownership, unless the Government can also offer them protection after they have become small holders; that many owners lost newly acquired land, and the fear of losing it again is general; and that, finally, the procedural aspects of land acquisition are so involved that it often takes a year before a tenant receives title.

The Hommas concluded, therefore, that the tenants are content with their present status and that they would much rather have the cultivation right than the property right itself. That is why they are willing to pay a high price for the cultivation right. They are relieved of paying taxes, they can get rent reductions in years of bad crops, and they are generally provided with other valuable facilities by the landlords, especially the good ones. Why then exchange the certainty of the present tenant status for the uncertainties of the smallholder status in the future?

If one were to accept the Homma statements at their face value, no tenant should be willing to buy land. This observer is of the opinion, however, that theirs is clearly a case of the wish being father to the thought. But as hard-headed realists who have a great stake in the coming rural reconstruction of Japan, they are at the same time ready with suggestions for a "proper" land reform, just in case a misguided tenant should insist on becoming a peasant proprietor.

(1) The Hommas readily concede that there are many bad landlords in Japan, but they insist that those are absentee landlords, who live away from their farms and so lose all touch with the life and needs of the tenants. The land reform should confine itself to those elements. The good landlords have made in the past and will make in the future great contributions to the agricultural economy of Japan. Such contributions will come to an end as soon as tenants become independent small farmers, equally poor, and with no interest in the general welfare of the community.

(2) What the Hommas think the price of land should be is not clear at all. Suffice it to say here that, on the one hand, the Hommas favor land prices based on the "officially registered land-rents," and, on the other, they actually feel that the officially registered, fixed land rents, for taxation purposes, are too low. The Hommas further suggest a subsidy for the unreasonably low priced lands and a lower subsidy for the unreasonably high priced lands. They refused to specify the amount of such subsidies.

(3) To the Hommas, the official price [5] of land as contemplated in the reform is the whim of a bureaucrat completely divorced from reality. The price is low, they believe, not only in terms of the black-market price of rice, but even in terms of the official price. Efforts to induce them to mention a fair price of land have not met with success. The impression left with this observer is that under the present unstable conditions certainly no price would satisfy them.

(4) The tenant should negotiate with the landlord directly for the purchase of the land. Such a procedure tends to add to the tenant's self-respect. If the landlord should refuse to sell for insufficient reason, or if the tenant considers that the price asked is too high, the Prefectural Governor, through the offices of the local land commission, should compel the landlord to sell at a reasonable price.

(5) The Hommas are opposed to any purchasing of land "en bloc." The amount of land purchased in a given community should be no more than the tenants of that community are willing and able to buy, and no tenant should be coerced into buying land.

(6) The Hommas consider that the Agricultural Associations, at least as presently constituted, are too "leftist." The associations should not be entrusted with land purchases of any kind. They are not impartial bodies and are often motivated in their decisions by personal and political considerations. The land commissions created for the administration of a land-reform program should be selected rather carefully. In the opinion of the Hommas, the commissions should be made up of five big landlords, five tenants, five peasant proprietors, and three nonfarmers. The presence of peasant proprietors and nonfarmers would help guarantee an impartial decision.

---

[5] The land-reform program fixed the price of rice fields at yen 750 per tan and that of upland at yen 465 per tan.

(7) The Hommas reiterated that they are not opposed to the diffusion of peasant proprietorship but regret that, whatever the nature of the scheme, Government officials who are not familiar with rural conditions will be in charge. In another mood, the Hommas imply that the pending land-reform bill is just another promise the Government is not going to keep anyway and that, for the good of the country, they hope that it is not just another paper plan. This was clearly a case of paying lip service to a cause the coming of which they dread.

In the main, interviews with Homma and non-Homma tenants supported the Hommas' claims to being good landlords. They all seemed in agreement that as between a small and a large landlord, the latter is to be preferred, and, given a choice, most of them would rather lease land from the Hommas than from any other large landlord. It does not follow that the Homma tenants are measurably better off than other tenants, but the assistance extended by the Hommas at strategic times is sufficient to tip the scales in their favor. Tenancy practices in Japan being what they are, the Hommas do not appear to be bent on squeezing their tenants dry. The Hommas seem to act in the manner of the feudal lords of old, treating the tenants almost as retainers. And since a feudal lord worth his salt had to take care of at least the basic requirements of his retainers, the Hommas have been trying to live up to that role. The modern version of that attitude finds its expression in the public library, shrine, and hospital they built in the city of Sakata.

Yamagata Prefecture is almost entirely agricultural. A person's prestige in society is measured entirely in terms of land he owns, rather than in the form of any other type of wealth. For this reason, the Hommas, who have been Yamagata's premier landlords for many generations, enjoy a unique position. To divorce them from the land, as the land-reform bill will surely do, is to undermine their "raison d'être."

They are opposed to land reform not only on economic grounds. The 16 Homma families are not only owners of the land but are themselves the active managers of the companies set up to administer their broad acres. As such, they are salaried officials, and in this manner the overhead expense, as well as the income from the rented land, flows to the Hommas. This double, close identification with the land has persisted for 28 generations, according to the principal owner, Mr. Yusuke Homma, creating therefore a psychological sense of old roots. To put a sudden end to them would make him and the other Hommas the "lonesomest men in the world."

The situation is not without its pathos for the Hommas. They are among the best landlords of their country. Yet they are too intelligent to contend that the order of which they are a part has brought security and welfare to their tenants. For all the paternalism, however sincere, many a Homma tenant is short of food before the season is over. The comparative benefits of the Homma tenants were never sufficiently telling to alleviate the need of the drastic land reform now in the making.

A Visit to Ueda Village, Yamagata Perfecture

After the Hommas, the lesser landlords and tenants spoke their mind. Down the road, a few miles from the city of Sakata, the seat of the Hommas, is the village of Ueda. The villagers work Homma land and also land belonging to others.

Ueda is situated in the heart of the Shonai Plain, one of the principal rice-producing centers of Japan. This determines its unique character. The village has very little upland; its land is nearly all paddy. Of a total acreage under cultivation of 640 cho, only 10 cho are upland. There is no forest land at all; the farmers depend for their timber and charcoal supplies on the timber-covered mountains, owned privately, or by the state.

Far removed from industrial centers, the village has not been affected by the population movements of the war and postwar periods. The total number of farm families is 285, or practically the same number as before the war. Ueda is a typical tenancy-ridden village. Only 13 families are classified as small landlords and peasant proprietors, and they own a total of 40 cho; 94 families are tenants; 129 families rent most of the land they cultivate; and 49 own most of the land they cultivate.

Approximately 55 percent of the land is owned and cultivated by the villagers, and the remainder is tenanted. The 300 cho of rented land is owned by almost 100 landlords, practically all of whom reside in the city of Sakata. When one considers the fact that two landlords alone are responsible for 90 cho of rented land, it becomes clear that Ueda village represents a striking example of absentee landlordism on a molecular scale. Yet Ueda is not an extreme case. This observer encountered elsewhere an instance where 232 landlords owned a total of 206 cho! They, and their like, are landlords by "courtesy," as it were. The competition for the cultivated land is so bitter that the tenants were willing to pay almost any price for the cultivation right. The independent farmer, when he had to, sold to an absentee landlord in preference to another farmer, for in this way he could continue to cultivate the same land, even though the rent was high.

It was my good fortune to attend this particular gathering of 30 odd farmers, most of them tenants, when the land problem and land reform were freely discussed and questions answered. The feeling was at once apparent that petty landlordism was the blight of the village. These landlords fully live up, wherever possible, to the old Japanese saying: A tenant is like a sesame seed, the more you squeeze—the more you get. They are devoid of generosity; oppose rent reduction, where such reductions are clearly in order; and in general are not concerned with the welfare of the tenants and the community. The bigger the landlords the greater are the chances of fairer treatment, the tenants maintained.

At least half the agreements are in writing, but the fact that they are written does not provide them with any real measure of security. Agreements in writing are usually initiated by the landlords and are drawn up so as to advance their own benefit; this is particularly true of the provisions for abrogating an agreement.

In Ueda village rice yields average about 2 koku per tan; in most cases a tenant pays the landlord 1 koku per tan, or 50 percent of the yield. A decade or more ago rents averaged more than 50 percent of the yield. To this should be added the cost of the all-important commercial fertilizer, shouldered by the tenant, and amounting to about 15 percent of the value of the rice crop. In many instances the amount of rent was determined by the frequency with which a given piece of land changed ownership. A new owner, especially a small one, would invariably attempt to raise rents and thus establish a higher price value on the land. Little wonder that many a Japanese tenant is normally in no position to make both ends meet from agriculture alone. In fact, in the case cited, the tenant will be short of rice for his own consumption much before the end of the season.

Landlords present at the meeting freely expressed their opposition to the new system of payment of rent in cash, beginning with the 1946 rice crop year. They insisted that farm rent paid in cash will be advantageous to the tenants when the price of rice is high; tenants will suffer with the decline of price. In their opinion, then, cash rentals will be in need of constant adjustment to the prevailing price of rice. Furthermore, once rents are paid in cash, the tenants will be in no position to ask the landlord for a reduction in years of poor crops; rentals on stores, or factory sites, one landlord pointed out, are not reduced simply because business is poor in a given year.

Regardless of the arguments presented by the landlords against cash rentals, the tenants prefer cash to kind, but they expressed the hope that the Government would maintain rice prices at levels high enough to enable them to make the payments. If, however, the old system of payment in kind came into practice once again, rentals should not exceed 30 percent of the crop.

On the all-important question of land reform, there was the difference of opinion this observer encountered at similar meetings, in other parts of Japan. The largest landlord present owned 23 cho. He was very much against the new trend, which, in his view, is one of "punishing the thrifty, the efficient, and the mentally better endowed." Cash rents, part of the visitation, are bad enough, but compulsory sale of land at official prices partakes of the devil. He must, of course, bow to force and sell the land. He was very certain, though, that equal ownership is as unnatural as equal mental capacities among men. There will always be poor farmers and rich farmers; failure of the land

FOREIGN AGRICULTURE HALLY H. CONRAD, EDITOR

A monthly publication of the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. The matter contained herein is published by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for proper transaction of the public business, with the approval of the Director of the Budget. Copies may also be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 10 cents a copy, or by subscription at the rate of $1.00 per year, domestic, $1.60 per year, foreign.

reform to take this into consideration constitutes its basic fallacy.

The tenants, on the other hand, are all eager for the opportunity to buy the land. In the course of the discussion it became clear, however, that for some tenants, when actually confronted with the choice of buying land, or leasing land at much reduced rents, the decision will not be an easy one. In response to a question as to whether the assembled tenants would prefer to buy land or remain tenants if rents were reduced to 30 percent of the crop, with the cultivation right guaranteed, all, with seemingly one exception, expressed a preference to become owners. The one tenant explained his opposition to purchasing land on the following grounds:

(*a*) The financial risks that go with ownership;

(*b*) The tax burden he would have to assume as an owner;

(*c*) The failure of Government-sponsored purchasing programs in the past; and

(*d*) Considering the meager resources of the newly created peasant proprietors, he would have to rely continuously upon Government aid, and there was no assurance that such aid would be forthcoming.

Upon inquiry as to whether any other tenant shared the views of the speaker, I was amazed to learn that practically all the tenants shifted to his position!

It would be unfair, however, to conclude that by changing sides, as it were, they rejected the idea of becoming landowners. The more valid inference is that, while they wish to buy land, they will first carefully examine the pros and cons of the purchase part of the land-reform program in the light of economic advantages from improved tenancy practices, which is part of the same land-reform program. There is also present the following noneconomic, yet very important, consideration: The yearning to be a peasant proprietor and the social advantages this status would bring in its wake. By their own admission, tenants of the Ueda village cannot under ordinary circumstances become independent peasant proprietors. The temptation to become owners is all too great, and it is doubtful if they will overlook the opportunity.

When the question of land prices came in for discussion, both landlords and tenants appeared uncommunicative. It reminded this observer of the British political scientist Eden, who, while making his inquiry into the "State of the Poor" in England in 1795, found both rich and poor very reticent on certain important subjects. Of "Rent of Land and Land Tax" he remarked: "These are sensitive plants which shrink from the hand of the political querist." The landlords in this instance behaved in the time-honored fashion. Not one of them was sure what a fair price of land should be now, but all of them were eloquent on the subject of the very low official prices. Only bureaucrats divorced from reality could fix the price of paddy land at yen 750 a tan, they maintained. Before the war a tan of good paddy field in Yamagata sold at about 600 yen, or 10 to 12 times the value of the rice crop. The official price now being 300 yen per koku, the same tan of paddy should sell at 6,000 yen. Whatever the merits of the landlord's case, it is certain that the Government and the landlords could not agree on price. The gulf is too wide to bridge.

The considered opinion of this observer is that the tenants failed to state what they believe to be a fair price, because they are of two minds on the subject. On the one hand, the official price is low, as one tenant finally admitted; on the other hand, why pay more than one can help. Yet tenants do not present as united a front for as low a price as possible as do landlords for as high a price as possible. The explanation is in the black-market sales indulged in by some tenants. A koku of rice thus sold enables him to buy 5 tan of land—if given an opportunity. Above all, he can afford to buy land at prices far in excess of the official price. But even the tenant who sells his rice at official prices would be willing, for the time being at any rate, to pay the official price "plus," but strictly unofficially.

This situation may explain why I met with so little response on one of the crucial points of the land-reform program—the price of land.

The assembled villagers, with the exception of the few landlords present, testified to a fair degree of recent prosperity. This trend set in during the latter part of the war and still continues in high gear in consequence of the high prices, official and black-market, at which farmers dispose of their surplus foodstuffs. This prosperity, however, is more apparent than real; it is a money prosperity, which should not blind one to the fact that very few farmers have enlarged their holdings, acquired new and better equipment, or built better homes or farm buildings. And real farm prosperity can and should be measured only in such terms.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1947

b